THE PLYMOUTH AND COTTONIAN LIBRARIES.

MESSRS. WIGHTWICK AND DAMANT, ARCHITECTS.

PLYMOUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY.

THE Plymouth Public Library, of which we this week give a view, has lately been altered and enlarged from the designs of Messrs. Wightwick and Damant, for the reception of a munificent donation from W. Cotton, Esq. F.S.A. &c. of Highfield, near Plymouth.

This donation, consisting of scarce and valuable engravings, original sketches and etchings by the old masters, with other curiosities of literature and art, will occupy one of the new rooms added to the original building, and be called the Cottonian Library. The room is 32 feet long by 24 feet wide, and upwards of 20 feet in extreme height. The sides, which will be hidden principally by cases, are plain, but the ceiling is of ornamental character. A plate-glass lantern gives light to the room.

The remaining internal additions consist of a news-room 24 by 20 feet, a law library, and an additional general library, each 36 by 20 feet.

The only portion of the exterior which is visible (that shown in our engraving), fronts Cornwall-street, and is Italian in character. The length of the façade is above 50 feet, and its height in the centre 46 feet. The effect is satisfactory, but would seem to be injured by the projecting houses on either side.

Mr. Thomas Marshall, of Plymouth, builder, executed the work at an expense of something under 1,200*l*.

THE NEW ENCLOSURE, BRITISH MUSEUM.

THE new enclosure round the British Museum is now nearly completed; and whatever opinions may be entertained as to the expediency or otherwise of putting up so large and costly a railing, it must be pronounced a fine work of its class.

The iron-work has been executed by Messrs. Walker, of York, and the very great pains they have taken from first to last to carry out their contract in all respects, well deserves commendation.

The models were executed by various parties: they were commenced by Lovati, an artist of considerable talent, who, however, died before he had made much progress: they were then taken up and completed by Mr. Thomas and by Messrs. Collmann and Davis.

The frieze is wholly of hammered iron: the remainder of the iron-work is cast from metal moulds, and was chiefly piece-moulded, in order to obtain relief. The carriage-gates are opened by a windlass, both sides opening simultaneously. Each half of these gates weighs upwards of five tons. An underground passage gives access to the works for oiling the machinery and pivots, &c.

The height of the granite curb varies from 2 ft. 9 in. to 3 ft. 9 in.: the height of the iron-work is 9 feet up to the top rail: the length of the whole palisade, from one extremity to the other, is about 800 feet.

The iron-work was contracted for by Mr. Walker, whose tender, amounting to 6,766*l*. was the lowest. The actual cost will probably be a trifle less, on account of some small omissions.

The granite pedestals are intended to receive sitting statues of Shakspeare, Bacon, Milton, and Newton, small sketches for which have been modelled by Sir Richard Westmacott.

We have engraved one of the foot-gates, as affording the best means of showing the work on a large scale. The spear-tops and some other parts are gilded.

STONE WALLS OR HEDGES?—At the last meeting of the Haddington Farmers' Club, Mr. Scott Skirving, of Campton, delivered an address on the question, "Whether stone walls or hedges form the more economical fences for arable lands? and secondly, what are the best modes of rearing and maintaining hedges?" The meeting, after some discussion, adopted a resolution in favour of walls in high climates and indifferent soils, but of hedges in all suitable situations.

METROPOLITAN CATTLE MARKETS.—A numerous meeting has been held at Brentford, to promote the adoption of a site in that vicinity for the proposed new metropolitan cattle markets. The site recommended adjoins the Thames, and is supposed to be highly suitable on account of the facilities presented by its direct communication, through the various railways, with all parts of the country.

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